

LECTURE / DISCUSSION / DEBATE
THE MODERN STATE

Terms and concepts to know:

Absolutism	Quasi-states
Bureaucracy	Rational-legal legitimacy
Charismatic legitimacy	Resource curse
External sovereignty	Sovereignty
Failed state	State
Feudal states	Strong state
Ideal type	Territory
Internal sovereignty	Traditional legitimacy
Legitimacy	Weak state

Study and discussion questions:

1. What are the common characteristics of all modern states, and how do these characteristics give their rulers power?
2. Do the characteristics of modern states limit power in any way?
3. Why are some states stronger than others? Why do some states fail completely? Is it always internal or can external factors also play a role?
4. D'Amato sees the state as a historical contingent development, not an inevitable feature of human society. Do you agree with his argument? Why or why not?
5. Last year, Rod Dreher suggested that the U.S. was heading toward "failed state" status. How prescient was his take on our situation then and has it changed much in a year in your opinion? Why or why not?
6. Sam Pizzigati made pretty much the same prediction last year. Which two things did he say needed to be done to keep us from being a failed state and have those two challenges been accomplished? If not, what happens next?
7. What is "Jacobism" and how does Hilditch say it relates to what is happening today in the U.S.?
8. Miller sees borders as being very integral to the concept of "the state" but in a special (and not necessarily positive) way. Explain this relationship and comment on whether you agree with his position or not and why.

Readings:

Orvis / Drogus – Chapter 2

Video:

Where to Invade Next (second hour).